

# FREDERICKSBURG AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Fredericksburg City  
Spotsylvania County  
Stafford County

Henry "Hap" Connors  
Chairman

Stephen Manster  
FAMPO Administrator

September 16, 2005

Mr. John A. Rollison III  
Special Assistant to the Commissioner  
Virginia Department of Transportation  
1401 E. Broad Street  
Richmond, VA 23219

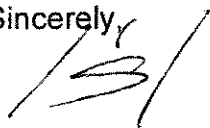
Re: HOT Lanes Comments

Dear Mr. Rollison;

Enclosed for the consideration of the HOT Lanes Advisory Panel are comments and recommendations developed by the Technical Committee of the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO). At its meeting of September 14, 2005, the FAMPO Policy Committee voted to forward these comments to the Advisory Panel as technical comments for consideration.

I trust that you and your fellow panel members will give these comments due consideration and use them in your proposals. If there are any questions with regard to these comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Stephen Manster  
FAMPO Administrator

Enclosure

## **HOT Lane Recommendations For FAMPO Policy Committee August 2005**

For quite some time there has been major congestion along the I-95 corridor in the Fredericksburg Region. The periods of congestion are constantly increasing, primarily around the PM peak period and from Friday evenings to Sunday night. Other times also provide major congestion problems for the general-purpose lanes and interchanges of the Interstate. It is critical that this congestion be alleviated in order to insure adequate flow of traffic on Interstate 95 through the Fredericksburg region. Because ours is the fastest growing region in the Commonwealth, and the through traffic is also rapidly increasing; it is necessary to implement projects that address the needs of this region as they relate to Interstate traffic. Due to the lack of funding, it has not been possible to provide projects that address these concerns.

With the advent of the two competing PPTA proposals for HOT Lanes and other improvements, we begin to see possible alternatives for addressing both our regional congestion issues as well as those issues that affect the through flow of traffic on the Interstate. This region and its localities firmly stress the selection of any alternative, or combination of alternatives that relieve congestion on the Interstate in the Fredericksburg Region, caused both by local and through traffic which do not jeopardize future needed improvements. We realize that not only will an alternative proposal be selected, but also intensive negotiations will then be conducted during the development of a final proposal in order to implement an effective program of improvements. In engaging in such discussions, we, as a region, strongly feel that the following issues and comments be given extensive consideration:

- Of primary concern regarding the competing proposals is that the selected proposal must improve conditions on the mainline I-95 (general purpose) lanes within the project area as well as the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes. Under this general statement there are four specific issues:
  - a. Every segment of the I-95 mainline within the project area, and HOV lanes will experience an improved Level of Service at the beginning of operations and throughout the entire period of the negotiated program.
  - b. All existing users of the I-95 general purpose and HOV lanes will be made better off than they would have been if the selected proposal had not been implemented. This means that, under the selected proposal, informal carpools (slugs), bus and vanpool and non-toll general purpose users will all be better off in terms of time saved to complete their current trip.
  - c. The negotiated agreement for the selected improvement proposal will not preclude improvements within project area of the I-95 corridor which are needed in order to improve operational conditions within the general vicinity of the corridor (i.e. the interstate roads and those transportation facilities that directly affect mainline traffic flows). In other words, the agreement will not stop any needed facilities or services because of a "non-compete" provision in the agreement.

- d. So as not to preclude future improvements, the development of the selected proposal should not result in the increased cost of additional planned or identified improvements in the I-95 system. This includes the use of right-of-way in the median which may have benefited alternative I-95 improvements such as collector-distributor lanes or interchange improvements identified in MPO or VDOT studies. If it is not possible to develop the negotiated project without resulting in more expense for other I-95 improvements, then monies should be identified and specifically earmarked for those improvements that have been made more expensive by the project. These funds should be based upon the best available cost estimates, and if additional funding is ultimately required, such funding should have priority over other uses of surplus revenues from the HOT Lanes project.
- Prior to the execution of an agreement for a project, a detailed independent Operational Analysis should be conducted in order to determine how the I-95 HOT Lanes and/or C/D lanes, and general purpose lanes will function over the term of the agreement. Particular attention should be placed on the functioning of interchanges and the interface between the HOT Lanes, C/D lanes, and other improvements, and the general purpose lanes so that connecting roadways and general purpose lanes are not adversely affected by the improvements noted in the agreement. If needed improvements or modifications to the proposal are identified through the Operational Analysis, they should become part of the total improvement program. These improvements or modifications should be made through the use of HOT Lane revenues and other funding sources in a partnership situation.
  - A principle of "uniform degree of benefit" throughout the I-95 Corridor should be established. This means that the Level of Service improvements along the corridor and interchanges with substandard (i.e. below c) service levels should receive equal attention. Areas or interchanges with higher levels of service should not have priority (construction or funding) over those segments or interchanges with measurably worse service levels.
  - Sufficient exits in the FAMPO region need to be included in the final project design. Northbound exits from the HOT Lanes need to be included at appropriate interchanges within the FAMPO region (except for Massaponax) as determined best through an Operations Analysis of the proposal in the region. The reason for this requirement for exits from the HOT Lanes is twofold. First, the HOT Lanes will serve as emergency alternate routes to the general purpose lanes during major blockages of the general purpose lanes. They will provide considerable relief to the I-95 Corridor during major incidents. The second reason concerns the basic benefit of the HOT Lanes. If there are no (or very limited) northbound exits within the FAMPO region, then the local benefit to FAMPO constituents is greatly reduced. The Fluor-Transurban team has stated that the average trip on I-95 today is 5.8 miles. If there are no exits along a 22 mile stretch of I-95 in the FAMPO region, a number of potential HOT Lanes trips will be precluded by the lack of egress points. This lack of exit points may be seen as especially detrimental on weekends and over holiday periods when the level of service conditions along the I-95 corridor are especially poor within the FAMPO region.

- The FAMPO Policy Committee recognizes that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) procedure is a complicated process to follow and it will be especially complex with regard to any final program. As a result, the Policy Committee encourages that the program of development proceed in a manner which provides the greatest relief to I-95 in the Fredericksburg area, and in doing so, proceeds with the NEPA process with all due speed so that improvements will benefit users of the I-95 corridor as speedily as technically and environmentally possible. It is requested, however, that the implementation of improvements occur in a manner that is designed, to the greatest extent possible, so that segments of the I-95 corridor are not made significantly worse off due to the implementation of components of the final program. In the first phase of the project, consideration should be given to extension of the southern terminus of the existing HOV Lanes down to Route 610 in Stafford County.
- An independent revenue analysis should be conducted prior to the execution of the negotiated agreement in order to provide a reasonable level of assurance that the revenue estimates provided by the selected team are realistic and receipt of the funds is likely.
- The surplus revenues generated must be reserved for use within the project boundaries of the I-95 Corridor. This should be reflected in the Comprehensive Agreement. To the extent practical, projects identified for use of the surplus revenues should be programmed to provide the greatest benefit within the project corridor in a manner which assures that the most cost effective projects are selected over less cost effective projects. Such considerations should also include environmental costs and benefits. It should also be recognized that the projects selected for surplus revenues generated by the HOT Lanes should be distributed equitably on a geographic basis within the project area corridor as well, so that the benefits of the HOT Lanes Surplus revenues accrue throughout the project limits in the I-95 Corridor in an unbiased and equitable manner.
- With the split between local and through traffic using I-95 during the day, should a review of existing studies indicate, or future studies show that collector-distributor lanes between US 17 in Stafford County and the Massaponax Interchange in Spotsylvania County provide greater overall relief to traffic congestion in the FAMPO region, more so than relief provided by HOT Lanes south of the Rappahannock River, then the final agreement should include these Collector-distributor lanes as an option. Such option must include the results and recommendations of the suggested I-95 Operational Analysis.
- The design of the selected proposal should maintain the historic and "gateway" character of the I-95 Corridor within the FAMPO region and funding should be earmarked for those bridges programmed for replacement that will be made more expensive as a result of the proposed project.

## Statement of Gary Jackson

### PPTA Advisory Panel Public Hearing on I-95/395 HOT/HOV Lane Proposals September 21, 2005

My name is Gary Jackson, a resident of Spotsylvania County, and I would like to share a few of my thoughts on the I-95 HOT lane proposals you have been asked to evaluate.

I first want to congratulate and thank both private sector groups for their efforts in developing these proposals and their willingness to partner with the Commonwealth of Virginia to provide enhanced mobility in the I-95 corridor.

As you know, countless hours and many thousands of dollars have been spent examining and comparing all of the technical minutiae associated with these proposals. And in due course, the engineers will sort it out and the necessary technical dimensions of this project will become clear. But that comes after we determine which proposal best serves the public interest.

In my opinion, the Fluor proposal is superior to the Clark proposal because it offers the most effective strategy to reduce congestion and improve service through a combination of value pricing and lane management. That is, after all, the essence of the HOT lane concept.

The Fluor proposal achieves this by extending the southern terminus of the HOT lanes and bus rapid transit nearly 10 miles further south to the growing Massaponax area in Spotsylvania. Terminating the HOT lanes in this area is critical in view of the prevailing traffic and commuting patterns and future growth south of the Rappahannock

#### Fluor Advantages:

There are many advantages unique to the Fluor proposal but a couple deserve special mention.

1. Greater Revenue Generation- The Fluor proposal will provide a greater source of revenue that can be used to support additional transportation needs in the corridor. More miles of HOT lanes means the opportunity for greater revenue.
2. Greater Transit Options - The Fluor **Bus Rapid Transit** component will provide an extremely flexible alternative that will help meet the shifting demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century commuters.

#### Conclusions:

- The Fluor proposal exploits fully the fundamental strategic objectives of the HOT lanes rationale by extending the HOT lanes nearly 10 miles further south deep into the high growth area of Spotsylvania.
- In contrast, the Clark proposal would terminate the HOT lanes in Stafford—far short of the need—and rely instead on unmanaged, general purpose lanes and truncated C/D lanes. This would be a terrible mistake.

I encourage you to complete your evaluation and make your recommendation to the Transportation Commissioner without undue delay—there is no time to waste.

Thank you for your time and service to the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Gary Jackson serves as the Spotsylvania County Supervisor for the Salem District**